



Maria Reese, MS, Media Coordinator
Phone: 828-695-5818
8/3/2007

For Release: IMMEDIATELY

CATAWBA COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH ASSISTS WITH NATIONAL RECALL OF FOOD

Catawba County Public Health has joined with inspectors from the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (NCDA & CS) to help remove potentially contaminated food products produced by Castleberry's Food Company that were recalled nearly two weeks ago. State officials are expanding efforts to make sure the products, which could contain a toxin that causes botulism, are removed from store shelves and other identified locations.

NCDA & CS has asked local public health staff to visit additional locations to identify any of the products still on shelves, and instruct those who still have these products on the proper methods for removal. The products include more than 25 brands of chili, beef stew, corned beef hash and flavors of canned dog food produced by Castleberry's Food Co. of Augusta, Georgia. A list of the recalled products is available online at www.fsis.usda.gov.

Public Health teams comprised of approximately 40 staff began visiting grocery stores, family child care homes, drug stores, gas stations, churches and any place with a food pantry in Catawba County on Thursday. While State and local workers are making certain these potentially dangerous products are off the shelves, it is imperative that the public is reminded to look for these products in their kitchens.

"Although we haven't yet had any cases of botulism related to this recall in North Carolina, we want to make sure we do everything to protect the public from a potentially fatal illness," said Doug Urland, Catawba County Public Health Director, "I am proud of our Public Health staff for their responsiveness and professionalism in handling this situation so effectively. I am also grateful for the cooperation of many organizations, recreation departments, municipalities, physician offices and churches for helping to spread our message to

"Keeping the Spirit Alive Since 1842!"

keep the community healthy.”

If anyone has these recalled products, use the following guidelines set by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for appropriate disposal.

1. If an unopened, undamaged product is found:

- Put the product in a sealable bag, wrap two plastic bags around it and tape it tightly.
- Dispose of it in household trash out of reach of humans and pets.
- Wash hands with soap and running water for at least two minutes.

2. If an opened product is found:

- Consumers should wear gloves and eye protection if dealing with an opened product.
- Put the product in a sealable bag, wrap two plastic bags around it and tape it tightly.
- Dispose of it in household trash out of reach of humans and pets.
- Slowly remove gloves and dispose after use.
- Wash hands with soap and running water for at least two minutes.

Botulism is a rare, but serious, paralytic illness caused by a nerve toxin. Symptoms of botulism include double vision, blurred vision, drooping eyelids, slurred speech, difficulty swallowing, dry mouth and muscle weakness. The illness can cause paralysis, respiratory failure and death. Symptoms usually occur from 18 to 36 hours after eating contaminated food.

Anyone who is experiencing symptoms should immediately contact his or her physician. For additional information about botulism or disposal guidelines, visit the CDC’s Web site at www.cdc.gov/botulism/botulism.htm.

For local information or questions, you may call Catawba County Public Health at (828) 695-5801.

###

"Keeping the Spirit Alive Since 1842!"